

## NIMBA Hosts Bike Ride on Andrews Trails

Advanced mountain biking group enjoys new challenges

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Photo by Greg Furry, NIMBA member(Photo by Greg Furry)

By: Sam Fry

The Northern Indiana Mountain Bike Association (NIMBA), a local chapter of the International Mountain Bikers Association, has begun utilizing Andrews University's trails for group rides, starting with a recent early fall ride which drew over 25 riders.

NIMBA is involved in developing and maintaining five trails in the Michiana region, and boasts over 200 members from Berrien and St. Joseph counties. Several members regularly use Andrews University's trails and have been encouraging the group to check them out.

On September 21 NIMBA held a guided ride on the trails, attended by local riders as well as NIMBA members. The ride lasted a couple of hours.

“Our riders are always interested in riding in new places,” says John Marquardt, president of NIMBA. “We have encouraged people to use the Andrews trails in the past, but have never organized an official ride there. While signage was an issue at one point, it’s improved quite a bit and it was exciting to give them a try for the first time.”

Andrews University maintains nearly 11 miles of trails on the northwest side of campus, and has undertaken steps to make the trails on campus accessible to the community including providing increased signage. There are two main access points: the Pathfinder Building lot on the north side of campus, and the parking lot along Campbell Drive, the road leading to Timber Ridge Manor just west of campus off of M139.

“The Andrews trails are a fairly unknown gem right here in our own campus backyard,” says Emily Carlson, assistant director of Student Activities & Involvement. “A group of dedicated volunteers keep them in great condition, and they are a beautiful oasis of peace and natural beauty mere steps from campus. Casual hikers and more hardcore mountain bikers alike can enjoy them, and I encourage students to grab a group of friends and explore. They make for a great Sabbath afternoon hike, or as part of a morning exercise routine.”

The Andrews trails provide unique features not present elsewhere in the Michiana region.

“These trails offer challenges we don’t have on the trails that NIMBA maintains,” says Marquardt. “People will drive up to Grand Rapids from Indiana to get those kind of rides, and here they are, 15 miles north of the Indiana border. You guys have quite an asset out there.”

Many of the riders who attended NIMBA’s guided ride were impressed with the technical challenges Andrews Trails has to offer.

“The climbs and descents are impressive,” says Marquardt. “It’s everything intermediate and advanced riders like to see. Next spring we’ll organize another trip out there. I think there will be more people riding out there on their own now that they’ve done it as a group. We are always looking to expand knowledge of trails in the area and are happy to add Andrews’ trails to our list of recommended rides.”

For information on NIMBA and how to join, visit [nimba-bike.org](http://nimba-bike.org).

For a map of the Andrews trails, visit [andrews.edu/life/rec](http://andrews.edu/life/rec) and click on “Area Recreation” or click on the "Related Website" below. Please note that most of the bike trails are intended for intermediate or advanced riders and should not be considered ideal for beginning riders.

**Related Website(s):** [https://www.andrews.edu/services/safety/img/trail\\_map.jpg](https://www.andrews.edu/services/safety/img/trail_map.jpg)

**Contact:**  
PR

[pr@andrews.edu](mailto:pr@andrews.edu)  
269-471-3322